

Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System Summary, 1995

The CDC Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) was developed to monitor health-risk behaviors among youth and young adults. Included in the priority high-risk behaviors are behaviors that contribute to unintentional and intentional injuries, tobacco use, alcohol and other drug use, sexual behaviors, unhealthy dietary behaviors, and lack of physical activity. The YRBSS includes a national, state, and local school based survey of high-school students. The 1995 National school-based survey used a three-stage cluster sample design to produce a nationally representative sample of students in grades ninth thru twelfth. A total of 10,904 questionnaires were completed in 110 schools. The school response rate was 70% and the student response rate was 86%, resulting in an overall response rate of 60%. The national data were weighted to adjust for nonresponse and for the oversampling of black and Hispanic students. The results of this survey can be generalized to the nation's high school student population.

The 1995 Tennessee high-school survey used a two-stage cluster sample design to produce representative samples of students in grades 9-12. A total of 3,197 students completed usable questionnaires. The school response rate was 56%, and the student response rate was 83%, for an overall response rate of 46%. Because of the low overall response rate the data could not be weighted. The unweighted data presented here provide a description of the priority health-risk behaviors of the survey participants. These results cannot be generalized to other students.

RESULTS

Behaviors that Contribute to Unintentional Injuries

Safety-Belt Use

Among Tennessee participants, 28.1% reported that they never or rarely wear a seat belt when riding in a car driven by someone else. Overall, male students (35.5%) were more likely than female students (21.4%) to rarely or never use seat belts. Black students (35.2%) were more likely than white students (25.9%) to rarely or never use seat belts. The race-sex group that was most likely to rarely or never use seat belts was black males (40.3%), followed by white males (34.2%), black females (31.2%), and white females (18.0%). Overall, students in grades 9 and 10 (30.9% and 28.2%, respectively) were more likely than students in grades 11 and 12 (25.7% and 26.6%, respectively) to rarely or never wear safety belts. Male students in grades 9-12 were more likely than female students in the same grade to rarely or never use safety belts (40.1% vs. 22.6%; 31.3% vs. 24.9%; 34.2% vs. 19.1%; and 35.3% vs. 18.9%, respectively and in order of grade level). Nationwide, 21.7% of students rarely or never used safety belts compared to 28.1% of Tennessee students participating in the survey. Compared to the nation, Tennessee students participating in this survey are more likely to rarely or never use safety belts among all groups discussed above.